

The Cheerful Letter

EVERY PLACE A CHURCH; EVERY DAY THE LORD'S DAY; ALL EVENTS BLESSINGS; ALL JOY
THANKSGIVING; AND ALL NATURE AND LIFE FULL OF GOD.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

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CHRISTMAS MORNING IN HEAVEN.

The Christmas eve had brought the Christmas
weather;

I watched the darkness and the drifting
snow;

Within, the little children talked together,
Sitting before the fire in a row.

But I had wandered far from childhood's
gladness,

And from their laughter sweet I turned
away,

And in my heart was only gloom and sadness,
Although to-morrow would be Christmas
Day,

For all the brightness of my life was lying

Under the dead leaves and the drifting
snow;

And all day long my aching heart went
sighing,

"If I might know! If I could only know!"

Is the heart cold that was so true and tender?

When she was here, we loved each other so!

Am I forgotten now in Heaven's splendor?

If I might know! If I could only know!

As thus I mused and some sad tears were
falling,

A sweet voice spoke in accents silver-clear,
Out of the darkness into sunshine calling,

In words and tones I could not choose but
hear.

"It is not Christmas Day I care for only,

I love the darkness and the stillness so;

I have such happy thoughts, I am not lonely;

It would spoil everything if I should know."

Unconscious teacher, sent to me from Heaven!

Wisdom of childhood ever pure and true;

Before I prayed the answer sweet was given,

The comfort dropped upon my heart like
dew.

Forgive the childish pain, the wilful sorrow,

I ask no more to see the way I go;

Whate'er lies hidden in the unknown morrow

It is a great deal better not to know.

And when about my couch the mists shall
gather,

And I lie down to rest beneath Thy wings,

I leave it all to Thee, O tender Father!

Nor even ask what that bright morning
brings,

What joys Thou hast prepared for my awak-
ing,

When my eyes open in the mansions fair,

When heaven's sunlight o'er the hills is
breaking,

What treasures of Thy love await me there.

Through the dark hours Thy hand shall still
uphold me,

While in my mind the sweet thoughts come
and go;

I can fear nothing while Thine arms enfold me;

It might spoil everything if I should know.

And while the tears came ever fast and faster,

Yet at the picture in my mind I smiled;

Of the disciples gathered round the Master,

While in the midst He set a little child.

—L. F. C.

THE APPROACH OF CHRISTMAS.

"He shall be as the light of the morning when the sun
arise; even a morning without clouds."—2 SAM. xxiii. 4.

The coming of great events is like the
rising of the sun. The dawn comes slowly
up, creeping gradually over the sky with a
tender, rosy hue; touching the clouds one
by one, as they float on airy wings above
the approaching day. Slowly and gently
flows upward the auroral light, beautiful
precursor, unsealing the eyelids of the morn-
ing. A chorus of song from tree and grove
announces the joyful advent of another day.
The sun does not come up abruptly into
the darkness, and change night suddenly
into day. Soft gradations gently introduce
the marvellous change, and the slow com-
ing of dawn is almost as full of interest as
the advent of the sun himself. Among the

great pictures of the world, many may have a loftier tone and a deeper meaning, but few have more charm than Guido's "Aurora," with the powerful solar steeds, the graceful attending and advancing hours; Lucifer, star of the morning, flying in front with uplifted torch; and the misty meadows, hills and valleys below still in shadow, but beginning to receive the gentle touches of the rising day.

So it is with all great movements in history. They unfold out of the past by a law of continued development. There are, indeed, hours of crisis alternating with development; hours in which the bud suddenly breaks into blossom; hours in which a dynasty or a faith is changed at once by an abrupt transition. Yet every crisis is but the turning-point of a long movement. The blooms which cover the plant to-day with a new beauty are the result of a slow preparation, for which sunshine and moisture, earth and air worked together during long months. Heaven and earth combine their forces, day after day, that a single violet may at last open its little blue eyes in its grassy bed. And so how many historic influences were united to make the world ready for the coming of Jesus! There was the long discipline of the Mosaic law; the noble inspiration of the prophets of Israel; voices, too, outside of Judea, crying in the wilderness of the Gentile world, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight." The power of Rome, introducing law and order into the barbaric world, brought down many a mountain of obstruction; Greek culture filled up many a low valley of ignorance; Socrates and Plato, Sophocles and Eschylus, were also, unknown to themselves, John the Baptists, awakening the human mind, softening the human heart, rousing the human conscience, till at last the fullness of the time had come, and the sun of righteousness arose as a morning without clouds.

It may be asked, "What has the coming of Jesus brought, that we should keep Christmas with such joy? He came as the Prince of Peace, but war still rages in the world, and Christian nations still maintain enormous armies with which to attack and resist each other. He came to preach good news to the poor, and to take away heavy burdens; but poverty and misery are by the side of the churches in all Christian lands. He came to destroy sin, and sin in every form is still to be found in our midst. Crime still has to be forcibly repressed by punishment; it has not been obliterated by the Lamb of God sent to take away the sin of the world!"

Yes, this, and more than this, is true; and

still, during all these centuries, we rejoice when Christmas comes. We still believe that evil is to be overcome by good, that war is to be conquered by peace, that sin is to be cured by the power of divine truth and love. In spite of all delay and all disappointment, we believe to-day, as Paul believed, that Christ shall reign till all things in heaven and earth, and under the earth, shall be the happy subjects of his divine dominion, and God's will shall be done on earth as it is done in heaven. And this hope is a living hope, not an old tradition; an animating hope, that inspires Christian effort; a reasonable hope, which rests not on delusion or vague desire, but on solid fact and the realities of experience.

The great gift of Jesus to mankind has been this living hope. There was little hope in the world when Jesus was born. The best men were the saddest, for they saw the evil around, and saw no prospect of good. The austere virtues of Rome had been changed by its conquests and wealth into luxury, cruelty, tyranny. Its liberty surrendered itself to dictators and despots. The charm of Greek genius, poetry, oratory, its intense life, its glorious history, had ended in weakness and moral inanition. Earth could not render back even a remnant of the Spartan dead to make a new Thermopylae. The great religions of the world had lost their power over man's faith. The oracles were dumb. Men were everywhere, more and more, without God or hope in the world.

Then was born out of the grave of Jesus a new hope, a hope full of immortality, patient, unconquerable. From the Master's tomb, where all his disciples' expectations were buried, it came forth with a power that astonished mankind. The disciples said: "He is not here! He is risen! He has not gone down, but gone up; and is with us always, even to end of the ages!" They were few; they had no influence, no education, no earthly force was on their side. Everything ought to have discouraged them, but they were not discouraged. Persecuted, they were not forsaken; cast down, they were not destroyed. And that hope was so mighty a power that in a few centuries it converted the Roman Empire; in a few more centuries it converted the Gothic and Vandal invaders. It was the salt to prevent the destruction of civilization; it was the leaven hidden in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened!

This hope has been the great gift of Jesus to mankind. It is a hope for ourselves, for our fellow-men, for society; it is a hope for this life, and the life to come. We know

that we are weak and sinful, but we look forward to a time when we shall be redeemed from evil. We know that the world is full of iniquity, but we see a day approaching when righteousness shall flow like a river, and all flesh see the salvation of God. We know that war, slavery, and crime prevail; but we have a firm faith that wars will cease, and man become pure, upright, generous, and good. In this confidence good men labor to reform the world; patriots contend for the honor of their land; missionaries seek to lift up souls darkened by ignorance. Without some vast hope, some great Ideal, the energies of the good would die out of them. Such is the inspiration of all great deeds in all time. It walks by faith, not by sight. Even science does the same. Euler, the mathematician, announcing a law of numbers, said, "I know that all experience is against it, but it is, nevertheless, true." This Christian hope does not rest on illusions, but on realities.

It rests on the fact of progress. In all Christian lands, to say the least, there is an unquestionable progress in whatever makes life worth living. In our own day, the great body of society has been lifted to greater freedom, larger knowledge, better tastes, a more rational religion, a far higher morality than prevailed in Europe and America a hundred years ago. It is not true that the rich are becoming richer and the poor poorer. Careful statistics show that while the profits from invested capital are steadily diminishing, the wages paid to work are steadily increasing in civilized lands. Education of the whole people is becoming every year better and more thorough. Religion is ceasing to be controversial, and grows more practical. Persecution for belief has come to an end; sectarianism is dying out; more formal and superstitious usages are abandoned for good works. The condition of woman is improving; she has better opportunities to-day than ever before. In our impatience such progress seems slow; it is slow to our desire; but if there be real and continued progress, no matter how slow it is, the end must at last be attained.

The hope of the world also rests on the character of Jesus. So long as he was looked upon as a wholly exceptional person, separated from all others by supernatural endowments, his perfections gave the rest of mankind little encouragement. But now, no matter what is believed concerning his divinity, all Christians emphasize more and more his humanity. Whatever else he was, he was a man, made in all respects like his brethren; tempted like ourselves, but resist-

ing temptation; tried by the sharpest disappointments, the most bitter opposition, but never losing his great faith in God and goodness. He came to show us the possibilities of human nature—and what *he* was, he believed all might be. He is way, truth, and life to us all. He was perfectly man; not, indeed, a mere average man, not a commonplace man; but showing us a type of perfect humanity; what man is meant to become. We see in him the future of our race. He is the Father of the everlasting age. We, also, if we will, may become perfect men in Christ Jesus; he says to his disciples, "Be ye perfect as your Father in heaven is perfect." The character of Jesus, therefore, is a perpetual fountain of hope for the world. To make moral progress we need a great ideal, which, also, is an actual. Jesus is both; and so furnishes perpetual encouragement to the race. Therefore, again, we rejoice in the approach of Christmas.

But still more than this. The coming of Jesus is a blessing to mankind, because of his faith in God as Father and Friend. He removes the poisonous mists of earth by dispelling the clouds which have hidden the sun of divine love. To him, from the first authentic reported word of his childhood, God was not king or master, but father and friend. "Did ye not know," said the twelve-year-old child, "that I must be about my Father's business?" God was his Father then, and all through, till the dark hour of agony, when he cried, "Abba! Father, let this cup pass from me!" But this meant far more than a form of speech or an intellectual idea. It was his perfect trust in God, his entire union of spirit with God, his absolute reliance on God, which has become an inspiration for the world, and has put the spirit in our hearts, by which we also can cry "Abba! Father!" It was that faith that enabled him to say, "I and my Father are one," and to believe that his disciples might also be one with himself and with God; "I in them, and thou in me, that we may be all perfectly one." It was that faith that made him confident that through him God would forgive all sin, and say, "Be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee." It was that faith that made him so sure of his mission that he could declare, "Before Abraham was, I am the Messiah, foreordained before the foundation of the world." In the same divine confidence he called on all men to bring their woes to him and be at rest; that he declared himself to be the way, the truth, and the life. His faith in God, in the forever flowing stream of spiritual life, in the vast possibilities of the future, in the great brotherhood of man

—this is our daily bread. Of his fulness we have all received, and grace upon grace. Happy those who can leave behind controversy and criticism in regard to the letter, and enter into this divine spirit; who can leave the shell and take the kernel; who have not seen, and yet have believed. Let whosoever will take satisfaction in finding contradictions in the letter of the Gospels, or in seeing myths and legends in its history. The faith of Jesus, which has been the inspiration of mankind, is no myth; his divine love, which has shown to us the essential being of God, and made us all the children of God, is no shadowy legend. His great reconciliation of reason and faith, individual freedom and brotherly love, is no mere doctrinal atonement. His holy character, always new, ever young, as close to the world to-day as in the first century; this is not an illusion. He himself is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever; the same to Rousseau as to Fenelon; the same to John Stuart Mill as to Cardinal Newman; the same to Theodore Parker as to Father Taylor.

"No fable old, or legend hoar,
Or dream of bards or seers;—
No dead fact, stranded on the shore
Of the oblivious years,

"But warm, sweet, tender—even yet
A present help is he;
And faith has still its Olive,
And love its Galilee."

This is why we welcome the appearance of Christmas; why friends send to each other little presents as tokens of love; why a peace of God comes at this season to the overtaxed brain and hand of work; why we dress our churches with the evergreen boughs, symbols of a trust which no winter storm of disappointment can destroy. It is the festival of infancy and age, of poor and rich. It is merry Christmas and happy Christmas. It is the perpetual aurora, still preceding the coming day. Let us keep it with gratitude, contentment, and hope.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE STILL HOUR.

Ah, brother! only I and thou
Are left of all that circle now,—
The dear home faces whereupon
That fitful firelight paled and shone.
Henceforward, listen as we will,
The voices of that hearth are still;
Look where we may, the wide earth o'er,
Those lighted faces smile no more.
We tread the paths their feet have worn,
We sit beneath their orchard trees,
We hear, like them, the hum of bees

And rustle of the bladed corn;

We turn the pages that they read,

Their written words we linger o'er,
But in the sun they cast no shade,
No voice is heard, no sign is made,

No step is on the conscious floor!
Yet Love will dream, and Faith will trust,
(Since He who knows our need is just,) That somehow, somewhere, meet we must.
Alas for him who never sees

The stars shine through his cypress-trees!
Who, hopeless, lays his dead away,
Nor looks to see the breaking day
Across the mournful marbles play!

Who hath not learned, in hours of faith,

The truth to flesh and sense unknown,
That Life is ever lord of Death,

And Love can never lose its own!

—*John G. Whittier,*
in "Snow-Bound."

When you stood by the side of your loved ones last year, and bade them farewell, and said, "It is the last time," it was the last time, and the first time, too. It was the last time you saw them on earth, but the first time you thought of them in heaven. From that hour you have stood looking up into heaven; you have had another friend above; you have been made a companion of saints and angels. At such times we think with sorrow of how much more we might have done for our friends than we did, of opportunities forever gone which we might have used. No one looked on that cold face—a brother, sister, wife, father—without saying in his heart, "Why did I not do more while I had him?" If you have felt so, then make use of that lesson by doing more for those who remain.—*James Freeman Clarke.*

THE BOOK AND MAGAZINE CLUB.

Send all offers and requests for this department to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.

Please remember, when you see a request for a book in the Book Club, to write a card to Mrs. Nichols, asking, "Shall I send such a book to such a person?" before sending it, else the person who requests it may receive several copies. When any one writes directly to you, asking for a book offered by you, send a card to Mrs. Nichols, saying that you have sent it. When you receive more requests than you can meet, send these to the Book Club to be printed here.

OFFERS.

All Souls' Branch offers the following. Please address Mrs. F. C. Brush, 17 East 38th Street, New York City. "Charity and Humor," Thackeray; "The Inside of the Cup," Churchill; "The Light of Asia," Arnold; "Gray Days and Gold," William Winter; "London as an Art City"; "Rev-

eries of a Bachelor," Marvel; "Gleanings for Housewives" (a cook-book); "Told after Supper," Jerome (ghost stories); "The Tragedy of Dreyfus," Stevens; "The Girls of St. Nodes," Meade; "The Woman in the Alcove," A. K. Green; "The Bee Man of Orm," F. Stockton; "The Day of the Dog," McCutcheon; "Literary Boston of To-Day," Winslow; "A Weaver of Dreams," Reade; "Princess Maritza," Bribner; "History of Egypt," Clement; Twenty Sermons, Phillips Brooks; "The Broken Halo," Barclay; "The Danger Mark," Chambers; "The Old Wives' Tales," Bennett; "French-English Pocket Dictionary"; "At Sundown," Whittier; "Queen Mary," Tennyson; "Cranford," Gaskell; "Our Village," Mitford; Poe's "Poetical Works"; "Last Days of Pompeii"; "From Night to Light"; "Beulah," Augusta Evans; "Ivanhoe," Scott; "Kenilworth," Scott; Tennyson's "Poems"; "The Fortune Hunter," Phillips; "The Upas Tree," Barclay; "Gates Ajar," Phelps; "Max," Thurston; "Virginia," Glasgow; "The Blazed Trail," White; "The Simple Life," Wagner; "The Ways of Men," Gregory; "Angela's Business," Harrison; "Oliver Twist," Dickens.

Mrs. Marion G. Atwell, 605 West 115th Street, New York City, offers the following: "Pre-Raphaelism," Ruskin (pocket edition); "The Three Things," M. R. S. Andrew; "Little Eva Edgerton" (Novel); Holmes's "Poems" (old edition, 1865); "Water Ghost, etc.," John K. Bangs; "Stepping Heavenward," Prentice; "Lucile," Meredith; "Fisherman's Luck," Van Dyke; "Nathan Burke" (Novel); "Hints on Household Taste" (very old-fashioned); "Songs of Motherhood"; "Old Harbor"; "Dewey the Audacious," Bennett; "Through the Eye of the Needle," Howells; "The Lovers of the Woods," Boardman; "Tributes to Shakespeare"; "Kate Carnegie," Ian MacLaren; "Days Off," Van Dyke; "Sonnets from the Portuguese," Mrs. Browning; "Pageant of Summer" (small book); "Point of View," Repplier (Essays); "Confessions of a Daddy"; "Cherry," Booth Tarkington (Novel); "Butter Side Down"; "Pigs is Pigs"; "Great American Pie Co."; "The One and the Other"; "The Heart of the Ancient Wood," Roberts; "In Christmas Day, etc."; "Great Books as Life Teachers," Hillis.

Miss L. Freeman Clarke, 5 Brimmer Street, Boston, Mass., offers: "The Ideas of the Apostle Paul," to ministers or theological students or Bible class teachers, also "The Christian Doctrine of Prayer" and "Self-Culture."

Mrs. A. H. Marshall, 6 Greenville Street, Roxbury, Mass., offers: Nations of the World, Vols. 18 and 19—Mexico; Bulwer Lytton's Novels, one volume; Fleetwood's Life of Christ; History of the Bible, by John Kitto and Alvan Bond.

The work has grown so it is no longer easy for the Book Club Secretary to care for all that pertains to the Club. The following ladies have volunteered to take charge of the different interests:—

FOR BIBLES, EITHER FOR REQUESTS OR OFFERS, APPLY TO MRS. LAURA HALLETT, 37 PINCKNEY STREET, BOSTON, MASS.

FOR SCRAPS FOR PATCHWORK, FOR REQUESTS, OR FOR OFFERS, TO MRS. W. B. NICHOLS, 25 FAIRMOUNT WAY, QUINCY, MASS.

FOR MUSIC, FOR REQUESTS OR OFFERS, TO MRS. THOMAS LACEY, 145 GRAND VIEW AVENUE, WOLLASTON, MASS.

REQUESTS.

1. Some time has elapsed since I have written to you; several changes in residence, but no change in devotion to our dear liberal faith. My hope has been realized and we now have a church of sixty members. Our minister, Mr. Einstein, heads an interesting and increasing Bible class. We are poor and so many expenses in this church venture gives us liberty to appeal to our own faith for some aid. We need a copy of "Origin and Character of the Bible," by J. T. Sunderland. Can I through the *Cheerful Letter* secure it? I wish you could know the eventful career of our little church up to now. Several times our feeble light almost expired. It did seem almost hopeless in face of opposition and ridicule for us to succeed. Somehow we have persevered, and are hopeful of much good through our trying experience in behalf of liberty of conscience. I am getting too old to read my fine-print Bible. Can I get a convenient size; one good print for our Sunday-school work, also? I am already obliged to many of your circle and can only reward by faithful love and effort to pass on the good they do for me. Mary E. Wicker, 709 East 28th Street, Norfolk, Virginia.

2. I have not written to the Exchange for a long time, and as there have been cards sent without the sender's name, I will take this way to thank all who have remembered me. As we expect to be alone during the holidays, I should be very grateful for any remembrances at that time. It is a lonely time for us since the children are gone, and

at Christmas and New Year's it is usually too cold to go far, so it hardly seems like Christmas to us. Any patchwork pieces would be very acceptable, and the *Ladies' World*, current issues, would be welcome. I am receiving the *Harper's Magazine* and *Ladies' World* of 1914, and should be glad of the numbers for 1915 and 1916 and *The Woman's Home Companion* and "The Second Coming of Christ." Any of these will be appreciated during the cold winter months. Last winter was severe, but I hope we may have it better the coming winter. Crops are not extra good with us, and everything we have to buy is so high priced. Mrs. Mary E. Stevenson, Waupaca, Wisconsin, Route 6.

3. Books and magazines, especially the *Ladies' Home Journal*, will be very welcome this winter to Miss Lulu M. Thompson, Tatum, Virginia.

4. Mrs. Flora Helms, Marshville, North Carolina, Route 2, sends thanks for reading and pictures sent her in the spring. She was ill and the addresses were lost. She asks for "Robinson Crusoe" and anything suitable for girls ten and eleven years old.

5. I thank the *Cheerful Letter* friends for the reading they have sent me, and should be pleased if they would send me some more, as it will soon be so cold I cannot get out. And please remember me on my birthday, the 19th of December. Should like any good book or magazine. Mrs. Bettie A. Short, Elamsville, Virginia.

6. Mrs. Lelia Williams, Naola, Virginia, asks for "Pilgrim's Progress" and story and drawing books for her children, eleven, nine, and seven years of age.

7. As Christmas will soon be here, I come again asking you all to help me with my Christmas tree, which I shall try to have as usual for the poor children and old folks of my neighborhood. Should like pictures, books, magazines, anything that will please children and older people who seldom see anything pretty and are glad to get even old picture post-cards. It need not be new things; send us anything you may have and wish to pass on where it will be appreciated and which we shall be so grateful to receive. I have had trouble this year; have had to carry my little girl to the hospital for an operation for appendicitis. It was not a success and she still suffers with her side. I am so grateful to you all for your kindness in

the past. Our lives would be lonely indeed were it not for the reading matter you all send us and the nice letters you write. Mrs. J. Porter, Doerun, Georgia, R. F. D. 3.

8. Mrs. Margaret Huffman, 117 Hill Street, Hobart, Oklahoma, a nurse, who has been quite ill, hopes that some one can send her *The Trained Nurse and Hospital Review*, as she is quite unable to renew her subscription.

9. We have been having a series of accidents here for the past few weeks. First a little boy about thirteen broke his arm; then an elderly lady fell, breaking her leg. The last was one of our near neighbors, who got caught in the gearing of an ensilage cutter, which tore the flesh terribly on one leg behind the knee; then there is a young mother of two little ones who has just returned from the hospital in very poor health. Something for reading for all these poor unfortunates would be very acceptable, as time hangs heavy on their hands,—either books or magazines; and patchwork pieces would be acceptable to the women. Mrs. Oscar L. Blaisdell, St. Albans, Maine.

10. A Unitarian worker among Orthodox Christians in India sends in the petition described below. He is much handicapped in his work on account of a very small knowledge of the English language and asks for some books which he deems useful to his study of our language. He would like as soon as possible to obtain the following books, to be sent to him in "one instalment," as he is anxious to begin his study, and "India is far away from America." "Correspondence Course in Practical English and Mental Efficiency," by Grenville Kleiser, published by Funk & Wagnall Co., New York City; "Correspondence Course in Memory and Mental Training," by Henry Dickson, published by Dickson School of Memory, Auditorium Building, Chicago, Illinois. He desires, in addition to the above, "Views of Religion," by Theodore Parker. D. Dawspelly, Uplands, Wallair, South India.

11. Mrs. A. C. Hottinger, Thornville, Ohio, Route 5, a bedridden, helpless invalid and great sufferer, gets so very lonely. Please remember her during the holidays with cheery letters, cards, good books, of any kind; all will be highly appreciated. She also wishes to thank the many friends that have remembered her through the *Cheerful Letter*.

12. I should like to receive "The Trail of the Lonesome Pine," "The Rosary," or any good reading, as I live in a lonely place and am the mother of three children. We stay the most of our time by ourselves. I am twenty-eight years old and I should like very much to correspond with a nice lady about my age. Mrs. I. L. Woodcock, care of Mr. V. Short, Kerr, North Carolina.

13. I am an orphan girl and have no home. Shall be glad to hear from friends; also to receive good reading. I am wishing for the book "Just David," by Eleanor H. Porter; also "The Widow's Son," by Mrs. Southworth. I am sixteen years old. Hazel Edwards, Palmer, Illinois.

14. I am very grateful to all who have sent me reading in times past. I shall be glad of the two books: "Trail of the Lonesome Pine" and "Fenwick's Career." I have been quite ill since February 20. Address Mollie Meade, Palmer, Illinois, Box 27.

15. I live in the country, thirty-five miles from a town, and it is real hard to get anything to read here. I have four small children, the oldest nine and the youngest one year old. I should appreciate anything wholesome to read. It has been years since I read *Youth's Companion* or *Scribner's*; and I should dearly love to have the Pollyanna books,—I have heard so much of them. My oldest boy would like to have something to read, also. He will finish fourth-grade work this year and is fond of history and nature books. Mrs. D. G. Shaw, Kerr, North Carolina.

16. Mrs. S. L. Turner, Dodson, Virginia, asks for reading and Sunday-school papers for children, the oldest twelve years of age.

17. Mrs. M. J. Hall, Sandy Ridge, North Carolina, spends many lonely hours, is in poor health, and asks for letters, reading, and patchwork pieces.

18. Since I have resumed my winter school work in a lonely neighborhood I again ask the readers of the *Cheerful Letter* for literature. I shall appreciate books and papers suitable for children in all grades of the public schools; and I particularly desire copies of the long poems or any of the works of the New England poets and of Edgar Allan Poe, some small Testaments, Bibles, a few new copies of "Latin Grammar and Reader," some novels, *St. Nicholas* and other magazines, and copies of the October and

November, 1916, *Hearth and Home*, published at Augusta, Maine. Accept my thanks for past favors. Address Miss Sue Hardie, Wertz, Virginia, R.F.D. No. 1.

19. I should like very much to receive some nice cotton and woollen scraps, also a few silk scraps. I am not able to do much walking work, so have to do something where I can sit and work, so quilt piecing and knitting are my only kind of employment. My hands are too lame and stiff for much fancy work, and I am too poor to buy material of any kind. Mrs. Lizzie Towne, Bufalo, Kansas, Route 2.

20. I should be very glad to receive any kind of reading matter, especially *The Ladies' Home Journal* and *The Woman's Home Companion*. Miss Myrtle E. Thomas, Elamsville, Virginia, R.D. 1, Box 73.

21. I am stationed here at the Central Luzon Agricultural School, Munoz, Nueva Ecija, Philippine Islands, as a self-supporting student, and away from big towns where libraries are plentiful. I should particularly like to have a Bible, hymns or music, and an oratorical or the like hand-book. I should be very much pleased if you can send me "Destiny of Man," by John Fiske, and "Handbook of Punctuation," by M. T. Bigelow. Address Felix C. Evangelista, as above.

22. Mrs. Paul B. Rucker, Amherst, Virginia, who is shut in almost entirely in winter, asks for reading with good print, and scraps for herself and a poor, deaf woman who has little to comfort her.

23. Mrs. L. A. Morris, Marysville, Texas, R. 1, will be glad of light stories.

24. Miss Hattie Edmonson, Tellico Plains, Tennessee, asks for *Ladies' Home Journal*. They get their mail but three times a week and will appreciate any reading.

25. Emma and Mary Trevey live in Naola, Virginia, in the country, three miles from school. Emma asks for *Ladies' Home Journal*, and Mary, who is eleven years old, asks for "Mother Goose Stories" or any suitable reading.

26. Simple music, both vocal and instrumental, is needed by the Music Committee. Please communicate with Mrs. Thomas Lacey, 145 Grand View Avenue, Wollaston, Mass.

27. Miss Emma Scott, a teacher in Provence, Oklahoma, asks for *Collier's Weekly* and school journals.

28. Owing to my husband's continued illness for over two years, I have read but little beside the daily news, and mostly have read aloud, as Mr. Warner cannot read for himself since his sight failed. The long, cold, dreary winter is so close at hand that I am especially anxious for reading matter to help us pass the long evenings. The *Cheerful Letter* with its numerous branches has never yet failed me, and I am encouraged to hope for something to read once more, although there is so much dreadful war news that I prefer almost anything rather than the Boston daily papers. (Mrs.) Helen M. Warner, Mount Vernon, New Hampshire.

29. Miss Blanche Hudson, Southland, Arkansas, would be glad of anything to help her in teaching primary grades.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS.

Mrs. Herbert Walker from Toches to Pittsville, Virginia.

THE MOTHERS' COUNCIL.

MORAL SUASION.

... Miss Lavinia did not care much to have children about. She said very few knew how to behave themselves at all properly nowadays; and no wonder, they were so badly brought up.

She had read all the modern books about education and the faults of parents, and the folly of Solomon and other old fogies, who held that childish wills should be kept in subjection.

Little did Miss Lavinia imagine what Tom, the errand-boy, was fetching her from the post-office that very moment. She saw him coming, and was glad; but, if she had guessed at the contents of his pocket, and the trouble and vexation that they were to cause her, I think she would have tied her bonnet on and fled, leaving the fatal letter forever unopened.

Her eyes opened wide with dismay as she read the following lines, written in so great a hurry as to be almost illegible:—

Dear Aunt,—I write to tell you what trouble we are in. Alfred has not been well all summer, and last week he had quite a severe hemorrhage from the lungs.

The doctor tells us we must go to the South of France for the winter, and we must start at once, so as to have the voyage over before the equinoctial. If we do this, the doctor thinks there is a fair chance of Alfred's getting entirely well. Our great difficulty is about the children. They cannot go with us, both on account of the expense and because Alfred needs every moment of my time. In this emergency I turn to you as to my only hope. You have so often said you would like to take charge of a family of little ones for a time that perhaps the request will not seem quite so dreadful to you as it would to some people: still, I feel that it is asking a great deal. If only you will take them, I give you free leave to try any experiments you like, as to discipline and moral culture (you won't let them catch cold or eat improperly, I know); and I shall love you and be grateful to you all my life. Telegraph "Yes": don't telegraph "No," dear aunt, or I shall go distracted.

Your affectionate

MATILDA.

P.S. I forgot to say that I shall send the children up next Saturday unless you forbid it.

"Good gracious!" said Miss Lavinia, as she finished. "There's no help for it, of course. I must take the children. As the poor soul says, I am the only person she has to turn to."

She looked about her rather ruefully. She was thinking of the children's last visit. Matty had a trick of walking over the flower-beds; and Reggy was forever falling into the water, and giving her dreadful frights. "But they are two years older now," she said to herself, "and better behaved, no doubt. Besides, I shall mend all that," she thought. "Matilda's whole system with the children is fundamentally wrong. She punishes them simply to relieve her own feelings of irritation. It never occurs to her to appeal to their consciences or reasoning powers. I shall treat them quite differently, and they are so little used to being dealt with like rational creatures that it will make the more impression on their minds. I don't believe I shall have the slightest trouble, and it will probably be a benefit for life to the poor little things to come for once under a really good influence."

Miss Lavinia herself went to the station to meet the children. Old nurse, who had her hands full, looked much relieved at seeing Miss Masters on the platform, ready to lift the little ones down.

That evening, after supper was finished, she called the four elder ones out to the piazza (the baby she judiciously concluded

was too young to be reasoned with), and proceeded to explain herself.

"You know, my dears," she said, "that you are come to stay with me for a long time. Now, if we are to live happily together, we ought to begin by understanding each other. I am a great deal older than you are, am I not?"

"Oh, my! yes," said Matty; while Reggy, opening his eyes very wide, answered, "Lots!"

"Well, being older, I am, of course, wiser. I have lived long enough to find out many things of which, of course, you can know nothing. This gives me the right to advise you. Older people know better than children what ought to be done."

"Pa said once that a smart boy of seven was worth two such donkeys as Judge Perry," remarked Reggy.

"Yes, and older people aren't *always* wiser; for there is Mrs. Gregory, who is ever so old, and mamma told Aunt Helen that she was the silliest old thing she ever knew,—not much better than an idiot," put in Matty. "I heard mamma say so my own self."

"Bless me! What sharp little wretches they are!" mused Miss Lavinia. "Alfred and Matilda seem to have talked before them in a very improper way: one can't be too careful."

"It is true that some older people are wiser than others," she said aloud. "But the foolishness grown person that ever lived knows more than any child can possibly know," which idea was so new and striking that it reduced the children to silence. "Now I want to tell you what my plans are about your lessons and play-times," she continued. "I have engaged a very nice young lady to come every morning and teach you."

"What's her name?" demanded Matty.

"Miss Annie Grace. She will come here at half-past nine, and go away at half-past twelve."

Reggy scowled, but neither of the children said anything.

"One of the happiest things in the world is regular occupation," went on Miss Lavinia. "You will all enjoy yourselves much more for having regular work-time. After dinner I shall let you go out to play until about five o'clock: then you must come in and be dressed for tea; and after tea I will read aloud while Matty sews, and you boys—let me see, what can you do, Reggy? Can you carve?"

"I can whittle a little, but I have not got any knife now," replied Reggy, omitting to explain that his knife had been lately taken

from him because of his having "whittled" the leg of a rosewood chair.

"I will get you a knife, then, and some nice bits of wood," went on his unsuspecting aunt. "There is nothing like teaching a boy the use of his fingers. Jack and Archie are perhaps a little young to learn carving, so I will teach them how to weave paper mats as they do in the kindergartens. That will be very nice for all of us. Two languages beside your own, an art, and a handicraft make an education, Ruskin says,—or, stay, I am not sure that it was Ruskin: it may have been somebody else. Never deviate from the truth, children, even in the smallest particulars. You see how I stop and correct myself when I am not certain of my facts."

"Never what?" whispered Matty to her brother.

"Never ruskinate from truth. What long words she does use!" replied Reggy, in another whisper.

"So, dear children, it is all settled," said Miss Lavinia,—"our hours of study, our play hours, our hours of reading and pretty handiwork; and we will try to be very happy together. If you are ever puzzled at what I say, come to me, and I will explain it to you. And I want you to obey, not because you are afraid I shall punish you,—for I never shall: I do not approve of punishments,—but because in your hearts you feel that I am in the right. If you do wrong, your own soul and conscience will punish you far harder than I could."

"Shan't you ever whip us—not really and truly?" demanded Reggy, unable to believe in such good luck as to be left entirely to the tender mercies of his own soul and conscience.

"No, my dear, never! Whipping hurts the body a little, but that is all. Wouldn't you rather be whipped a dozen times over than feel deep down in your heart the horrible sense that you have done something that is wicked?"

Reggy shifted uneasily from foot to foot, but made no reply. In his heart he was not sure that he should prefer the dozen whippings.

"Now," said Miss Lavinia, happily convinced that her eloquence had taken effect, "now I should advise you to go to bed, so as to wake quite fresh to-morrow, ready to enjoy the long, beautiful day."

The others went, but Matty lingered. "I'm not a bit sleepy," she said. "Can't I sit up a little longer?"

"It would be better to go now. You have had a long journey to-day, and must be tired."

"I don't feel tired," persisted Matty, who was naturally of an obstinate disposition.

"Perhaps not, but you will to-morrow. Take my advice, dear, and go now."

But Matty, finding that argument was tolerated, persisted in staying till old nurse appeared in the hall with an authoritative summons, "Miss Matty, I'm waiting for you. Come at once."

Then, the habit of obedience prevailing, she jumped up and ran in. Miss Lavinia was relieved to have her go; still, she said to herself: "I don't like that peremptory tone of Sarah's. I must speak to her on the subject."

She did speak next day, but very little satisfaction was to be got out of Sarah.

"Why, bless you, Miss Masters, the day'd have to be forty-eight hours long if I'd got to stop and reconcile them children to doing all the things they ought to do. You don't know them, ma'am, Miss Matty now, she'd argue over each of her stockings before she'd put 'em on, if I'd let her; and Jack's a child that's never safe unless you see him. No, no: word-and-mind-me is my motto with children and always has been; and I'm too old to change now."

"Well, Sarah, please to understand one thing," said Miss Lavinia, with decision. "So long as the children remain in my care, they are not to be punished by you or any one else. I am utterly and totally opposed to whipping. A child's body is a sacred thing, which should never be insulted by a rude touch; and I will not have it done in my house."

"As you like, ma'am," muttered Sarah; but she said to herself afterward, with grim satisfaction: "Fine times we shall have! Children's bodies ain't too sacred to get into mischief, so I don't see why they're too sacred to be slapped for it. Just let her wait till she's got Reggy on her hands in one of his tantrums, and we'll see how them grand ideas of hers wash. She'll be glad enough to punish then, or I'll miss my guess; and, once she begins, she'll be harder on 'em than Miss Matilda ever was, that's the way it always goes."

For the first week or two things went smoothly enough. The novelty of the place kept the children amused; and Miss Grace was a pleasant, cheerful person, and made lesson-time as agreeable as lesson-times ever can be. She saw symptoms now and then which made her sure that the children would not always be so docile as they seemed at present. In fact, just then they were rather in the state of mind of a horse whose curb-bit has suddenly snapped in two. He only

half understands what has happened; and it is not until he has tried some small experiments, such as tossing his head and prancing, that he makes sure that he is free to run away if he likes to do so.

So it was with the little Hazards. They had not been brought up more strictly than other children, but they had the habit of obedience. Mrs. Hazard did not like punishments any more than did her aunt, but she held that they were necessary now and then.

"A child is like a little boat," she once said. "His will is the rudder. Till he can manage it for himself, I must manage it for him. It is a great deal less cruel to make him accept this fact than to leave him to himself with the forlorn sense of being out all alone on the sea, with no one to take charge of him. Just as soon as he is strong enough to take the helm, I shall let go; but till then I must keep firm hold."

But now the "firm hold" was relaxed, and the children felt the change. Gradually the spirit of disobedience took possession of them. Nurse scolded; but she was not allowed to threaten or to punish, so her scolding counted for little. Miss Lavinia "reasoned" sometimes with good results, but more often with none. The children were not particularly fond of her as yet, so that she could not govern them by the law of love, as their mother might have done; and they soon ceased to be in the least afraid of her. After a while, I am sorry to say, it began to seem great fun to them to defy their aunt. Matty, who loved to dispute, would stand for an hour battling over such petty matters as to whether she should or should not put on her India-rubbers, or wear a shade hat, or have her hair brushed for tea. Here is a specimen of one of these disputes.

Scene, the piazza. A thick sea-fog blowing up from the sea. Matty standing in the damp grass; Miss Lavinia on the steps, very uncomfortable.

"You really ought to come in, Matty: you have a little cold, already, you know."

"Oh, no, aunty, I haven't any cold."

"But I heard you sneeze half a dozen times last night."

"That was only because something tickled in my nose."

"But, really, even if you have no cold, it is not prudent for you to be out there. With those thin boots, too! Really, it is very imprudent."

"These are not my really thin boots, you know, aunty: these are my half-and-halves. I only wear the really thin ones when I'm dressed up."

"They are thin enough to let the damp through to your feet, my dear. Now, Matty, be reasonable, my child. Don't you see that you are making me anxious?"

"But, aunty, why are you anxious? Mamma said once that it was wrong to worry about trifles. My feet are as warm as a toast,—really and truly they are. And I want to go across to the petunia bed and get a red and white striped one for Archie. I promised it to him."

"O my child! You'll be sopping wet if you go all the way across the lawn to that bed. Come back, and I'll send Tom round to pick you the petunia."

"He won't know which kind I want, aunty. And, besides, I'd rather go myself. The grass isn't wet at all,—only just the least bit."

"Matty, you are not using your reason."

"Oh, yes, I am, aunty. You aren't out here, so you can't tell how dry the grass is!" And off ran Matty. She was very hoarse that evening; and Miss Lavinia, in a dreadful fright as to croup, sent for the doctor.

"Why, what a silly little girl you must be to go and wet your feet in the damp grass when your aunt told you not to!" remarked the doctor, when he heard the story.

"She didn't tell me not to: she only advised me," replied Matty, quite alive to the difference.

"Oh, that was it, was it? What a silly little girl you must be, then, not to take advice!"

"Aunty doesn't always know," observed Miss Matty, pertly.

"Ah! She's different from me, then. I always know; and what I know is this,—that you must take this medicine regularly and make no fuss, or I shall have to come and put it down your throat myself," said the old doctor, who was used to strict obedience from his own children.

"How will you do it?" asked Miss Matty.

"Hold your nose," answered Dr. Green, briefly.—*Susan Coolidge.*

(To be continued.)

NATURAL HISTORY.

SOME KNOWING PETS.

Madge was a beautiful, fleet-footed bay horse. I often said, "She knew more than the Indians," and this without any discourtesy to the Indians. She always knew when it was Sunday, perhaps by hearing the nine o'clock church bells, and, while on other days she didn't notice the churches, on Sundays she would always gallop past them for fear

the church bells would peal out and she disliked all loud noises.

To go down town from our home we were obliged to go over two railroad crossings. Always when within a few rods of the crossing Madge of her own accord would slow up and turn her pretty ears to hear if the train were coming. If it were, she would stop short and wait motionless until it had passed, then without any sign from me she would go on. If, however, she did not hear a train she would almost fly over the track to make sure of getting out of the way. She was so dependable that I was relieved of all anxiety in regard to the crossings. She knew a great deal and she seemed to realize that she was appreciated and prized. Horses and other animals are too often treated as though they were senseless machines instead of sentient living beings.

Sultan was a magnificent St. Bernard, a near relative of "Merchant Prince." He was kind to everybody, especially to little children and kittens. Many a time I have seen him take small kittens in his mouth and carry them to a place of safety, and it was no unusual thing for them to sleep on his soft furry back on cold winter nights. He had a wonderful understanding of the meaning of words and sentences, although he had never been trained except in the way that all dogs are entitled to be. He never went far from home, but one day I said to him that after lunch he might get in my carriage and ride down town with me. He never had been in the carriage, but, sure enough, when an hour later the carriage came to the door he was waiting, and without a word from me jumped in and settled himself for the drive, which he greatly enjoyed.

We had a fine cat named Fluffy. One of her kittens was named Jappy in honor of a Japanese lady who was visiting at our house. At the same time there were some children visitors who loved to play with the kitty, much to the worry of the mother cat, who came appealingly to me, and I advised her to take Jappy to the attic. To my surprise she did this, by climbing a tree with the kitty in her mouth and making her way over a high roof, and she kept Jappy in the quiet attic until the children had finished their visit. Another kitty of the same family was given the name of Geranium by my housekeeper's little girl. We called him Jerry for short. He seemed very much offended when some other kittens came, and left the house, going to the neighborhood grocers, occasionally coming back for milk; but he never failed to come on Saturday evening for his baked beans, and he came on no other evening.

About two years ago his mother died, and without any special invitation he came home to stay. He is now old and sedate, and we call him Deacon Jerry.—*L. M. N. Stevens, in Our Dumb Animals.*

CHILDREN'S CLASSICS.

OUR FIELD.

(Continued from last number.)

"It's almost *too* good, Sandy dear!" said I, as we crossed the field to the opposite hedge.

"The best is to come," said Sandy. "I've a very good mind not to let out till to-morrow." And to our distraction he sat down in the middle of the field, put his arms around his knees, as if we were playing at "Honey pots," and rocked himself backwards and forwards with a face of brimming satisfaction.

Neither Richard nor I would have been so mean as to explore on our own account, when the field was Sandy's discovery, but we tried hard to persuade him to show us everything.

He had the most provoking way of laughing and holding his tongue, and he did that now, besides slowly turning all his pockets inside out into his hands, and mumbling up the crumbs and odd currants, saying "Guess!" between every mouthful.

But when there was not a crumb left in the seams of his pockets, Sandy turned them back, and, jumping up, said: "One can only tell a secret once. It's a hollow oak. Come along!"

He ran and we ran to the other side of Our Field. I had read of hollow oaks, and seen pictures of them, and once I dreamed of one, with a witch inside, but we had never had one to play in. We were nearly wild with delight. It looked all solid from the field, but when we pushed behind, on the hedge side, there was the door, and I crept in, and it smelt of wood, and delicious damp. There could not be a more perfect castle, and though there were no windows in the sides, the light came in from the top, where the polypody hung over like a fringe. Sandy was quite right. It was the very best thing in Our Field.

Perronet was as fond of the field as we were. What he liked were the little birds. At least, I don't know that he liked them, but they were what he chiefly attended to. I think he knew that it was Our Field and thought he was the watch-dog of it, and whenever a bird settled down anywhere

he barked at it, and then it flew away, and he ran barking after it, till he lost it; and by that time another had settled down, and then Perronet flew at him, and so on, all up and down the hedge. He never caught a bird, and never would let one sit down, if he could see it.

We had all kinds of games in Our Field. Shops—for there were quantities of things to sell—and sometimes I was a moss merchant, for there were ten different kinds of moss by the brook, and sometimes I was a jeweller, and sold daisy-chains and pebbles, and coral sets made of holly berries, and oak-apple necklaces; and sometimes I kept provisions like earth-nuts, and mallow cheeses, and mushrooms; and sometimes I kept a flower-shop, and sold nosegays and wreaths, and umbrellas made of rushes. I liked that kind of shop because I am fond of arranging flowers, and I always make our birthday wreaths. And sometimes I kept a whole lot of shops, and Richard and Sandy bought my things, and paid for them with money made of elder-pith, sliced into rounds. The first shop I kept was to sell cowslips, and Richard and Sandy lived by the brook, and were wine merchants, and made cowslip wine in a tin mug.

The elder tree was a beauty. In July the cream-colored flowers were so sweet we could hardly sit under it, and in the autumn it was covered with berries; but we were always a little disappointed that they never tasted in the least like elderberry sirup. Richard used to make flutes out of the stalks, and one really did to play tunes on, but it always made Perronet bark.

Richard's every-day cap had a large hole in the top, and when we were in Our Field we always hung it on the top of the tallest of the two stile-posts, to show that we were there; just as the Queen has a flag hung out at Windsor Castle when she is at home.

We played at castles and houses, and when we were tired of the houses, we pretended to pack up, and went to the seaside for change of air by the brook. Sandy and I took off our shoes and stockings, and were bathing women, and we bathed Perronet; and Richard sat on the bank and was a "tripper," looking at us through a telescope; for when the elder-stems cracked and wouldn't do for flutes, he made them into telescopes. And before we went down to the brook we made jam of hips and haws from the hedge at the top of the field, and put it into acorn cups, and took it with us, that the children might not be short of roly-polies at the seaside.

Whatever we played at we were never disturbed. Birds, and cows, and men and horses ploughing in the distance, do not disturb you at all.

We were very happy that summer; the boys were quite happy, and the only thing that vexed me was thinking of Perronet's tax-money. For months and months went on and we did not save it. Once we got as far as twopence halfpenny, and then one day Richard came to me and said: "I must have some more string for the kite. You might lend me a penny out of Perronet's stocking, till I get some money of my own."

So I did; and the next day Sandy came and said, "You lent Dick one of Perronet's coppers; I'm sure Perronet would lend me one," and then they said it was ridiculous to leave a halfpenny there by itself, so we spent it in acid drops.

It worried me so much at last that I began to dream horrible dreams about Perronet having to go away because we hadn't saved his tax-money. And then I used to wake up and cry till the pillow was so wet I had to turn it. The boys never seemed to mind, but then boys don't think about things; so that I was quite surprised when one day I found Sandy alone in our field with Perronet in his arms, crying, and feeding him with cake; and I found he was crying about the tax-money.

I cannot bear to see boys cry. I would much rather cry myself, and I begged Sandy to leave off, for I said I was quite determined to try and think of something.

It certainly was remarkable that the very next day should be the day when we heard about the flower show.

It was in school—the village school, for mother could not afford to send us anywhere else—and the school master rapped on his desk and said, "Silence, children!" and that at the agricultural show there was to be a flower show this year, and that an old gentleman was going to give prizes to the school-children for window-plants, and for the best-arranged wild flowers. There were to be nosegays and wreaths, and there was to be a first prize of five shillings, and a second prize of half-a-crown, for the best collection of wild flowers with the names put to them.

"The English names," said the school-master; "and there may be—Silence, children!—there may be collections of ferns, or grasses, or mosses to compete, too, for the gentleman wishes to encourage a taste for natural history."

And several of the village children said,

"What's that?" and I squeezed Sandy's arm, who was sitting next to me, and whispered, "Five shillings!" and the schoolmaster said, "Silence, children!" and I thought I never should have finished my lessons that day for thinking of Perronet's tax-money.

July is not at all a good month for wild-flowers; May and June are far better. However, the show was to be in the first week in July.

I said to the boys: "Look here: I'll do a collection of flowers. I know the names, and I can print. It's no good two or three people muddling with arranging flowers; but if you will get me what I want, I shall be very much obliged. If either of you will make another collection, you know there are ten kinds of mosses by the brook; and we have names for them of our own, and they are English. Perhaps they'll do. But everything must come out of Our Field."

The boys agreed, and they were very good. Richard made me a box, rather high at the back. We put sand at the bottom and damped it, and then feather moss, lovely clumps of it, and into that I stuck the flowers. They all came out of Our Field. I like to see grass with flowers, and we had very pretty grasses, and between every bunch of flowers I put a bunch of grass of different kinds. I got all the flowers and all the grasses ready first, and printed the names on pieces of cardboard to stick in with them, and then I arranged them by my eye, and Sandy handed me what I called for, for Richard was busy at the brook making a tray of mosses.

Sandy knew the flowers and the names of them quite as well as I did, of course; we knew everything that lived in Our Field; so when I called, "Ox-eye daisies, cock's-foot grass, labels; meadow-sweet, fox-tail grass, labels; dog-roses, shivering grass, labels;" and so on, he gave me the right things, and I had nothing to do but to put the colors that looked best together next to each other, and to make the grass look light, and pull up bits of the moss to show well. And at the very end I put in a label, "All out of Our Field."

I did not like it when it was done; but Richard praised it so much it cheered me up, and I thought his mosses looked lovely.

The flower-show day was very hot. I did not think it could be hotter anywhere in the world than it was in the field where the show was; but it was hotter in the tent.

We should never have got in at all—for you had to pay at the gate—but they let competitors in free, though not at first. When we got in, there were a lot of grown-up

people, and it was very hard work getting along among them, and getting to see the stands with the things on.

We kept seeing tickets with "1st Prize" and "2d Prize," and struggling up; but they were sure to be dahlias in a tray, or fruit that you mightn't eat, or vegetables. The vegetables disappointed us so often I got to hate them. I don't think I shall ever like very big potatoes (before they are boiled) again, particularly the red ones. It makes me feel sick with heat and anxiety to think of them.

We had struggled slowly all round the tent, and seen all the cucumbers, onions, lettuces, long potatoes, round potatoes, and everything else, when we saw an old gentleman, with spectacles and white hair, standing with two or three ladies. And then we saw three nosegays in jugs, with all the green picked off, and the flowers tied as tightly together as they would go, and then we saw some prettier ones, and then we saw my collection, and it had got a big label in it marked "1st Prize," and next to it came Richard's moss-tray, with the Hair-moss, and the Pincushion-moss, and the Scale mosses, and a lot of others with names of our own, and it was marked "2d Prize." And I gripped one of Sandy's arms just as Richard seized the other, and we both cried, "Perronet is paid for!"

There was two-and-sixpence over. We never had such a feast! It was a picnic tea, and we had it in Our Field. I thought Sandy and Perronet would have died of cake, but they were none the worse.

We were very much frightened at first when the old gentleman invited himself; but he would come, and he brought a lot of nuts, and he did get inside the oak, though it is really too small for him.

I don't think there ever was anybody so kind. If he were not a man, I should really and truly believe in Sandy's fairy godmother.

Of course I don't really believe in fairies. I am not so young as that. And I know that Our Field does not exactly belong to us.

I wonder to whom it does belong? Richard says he believes it belongs to the gentleman who lives at the big red house among the trees. But he must be wrong, for we see that gentleman at church every Sunday, but we never saw him in Our Field.

And I don't believe anybody could have such a field of their very own, and never come to see it, from one end of summer to the other.—From "A Great Emergency, and Other Tales," by Juliana Ewing.

CHRISTMAS CAROL.

The earth has grown old with its burden of
care,

But at Christmas it always is young.
The heart of the jewel burns lustrous and fair,
And its soul full of music breaks forth on the
air,

When the song of the angels is sung.

It is coming, old earth, it is coming to-night!
On the snowflakes that cover thy sod
The feet of the Christ-child fall gentle and
white,

And the voice of the Christ-child tells out
That mankind are the children of God.

On the sad and lonely, the wretched and
poor,

The voice of the Christ-child shall fall;
And to every blind wanderer open the door
Of a hope that he dared not to dream of
before,

With a sunshine of welcome for all.

The feet of the humblest may walk in the
field

Where the feet of the Holiest have trod.
This, this is the marvel to mortals revealed
When the silvery trumpets of Christmas have
pealed

That mankind are the children of God.

—Phillips Brooks.

OUR MASTER.

No fable old, nor mythic lore,
Nor dream of bards and seers,
No dead fact stranded on the shore
Of the oblivious years;—

But warm, sweet, tender, even yet
A present help is He;
And faith has still its Olivet,
And love its Galilee.

The healing of his seamless dress
Is by our beds of pain;
We touch him in life's throng and press,
And we are whole again.

Through him the first fond prayers are said
Our lips of childhood frame,
The last low whispers of our dead
Are burdened with his name.

Our Lord and Master of us all!
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own thy sway, we hear thy call,
We test our lives by thine.

—John Greenleaf Whittier.

IV.

PI.

Ym gosn, evsa hits, si tîltel rotwh;
 I ayl eht yewra enp daesi,
 dan shiwh uyo laheht, dan vole, dña ritmh,
 Sa silf eht molnes hictrsams-dite.
 Sa tîfs het loyh Cmirhasts hirbt,
 Eb hits, dogo refidns, ruo rocal listl,—
 Eb capee no hetar, eb eapec no terha,
 Ot nme fo teglen liwl.

—*Kahctyare.*

I.

ACROSTIC.

All of the words described contain the same number of letters. When rightly guessed and written one below the other, the diagonal beginning with the upper left-hand letter and ending with the lower right-hand letter spells the name of a person born in December.

1. A novel by Sir Walter Scott.
2. An American general.
3. A great English artist.
4. An early Governor of Massachusetts.
5. A place in Cornwall, England, where in 1643 the Royalists defeated the Parliamentarians.
6. A seashore resort in Sussex, England.
7. An English divine.
8. A dependency of Newfoundland.

II.

HIDDEN DIAMOND.

(Pick out nine words that will form a perfect diamond.)

He was a renowned scientific man, incidentally also a popular I. O. O. F., holding a high office in a lodge in N. D., and he had gone to Corea to study the botanical curiosities and the rock formation of that country. After a long silence, his college received from him the following report: "Have been very busy studying a new specimen of such rare beauty that it has aroused all the dormant enthusiasm in my nature. Its name is Anise, and it is a pretty little tot, about nineteen years old, the daughter of a Spanish Don, and the neatest specimen I have found, botanical, geological, or any other kind, so I expect my time will be very much taken up with it for the future."

—*The Wellspring.*

III.

CHARACTERISTIC INITIALS.

1. Told 'Bout Riding.
2. Ja Whol, Very Great.
3. Torismondos Tragedian.
4. Eerily Awfully Phitonian.
5. Just Home Praised.

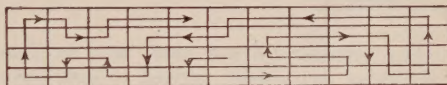
V.

PEÇULAR ARITHMETIC.

To two-sevenths of Chicago add one-fourth of Ware, one-fourth of Erie, one-fifth of Spain, one-fifth of Acton, one-sixth of Madrid, one-sixth of France, one-fifth of Wales, and make the name of a day dear to all, both young and old.

Answers to puzzles in the November number.

I. LABYRINTH OF LETTERS.—



Cranberry sauce, nuts, sweet cider, turkey, pumpkin pie.

II. QUESTIONS IN HISTORY.—1. King Arthur of Britain, who instituted the Round Table. 2. Lancelot. 3. One of the Paladins of Charlemagne, a cousin of Roland.

III. BEHEADINGS.—I. Bore-ore. 2.
Cage-age. 3. Grain-rain. 4. Dare-are. 5.
Fall-all.

IV. HEROES AND HEROINES.—1. Bride of Lammermoor. 2. Love's Labor Lost. 3. Merchant of Venice. 4. Our Boys. 5. Heart of Midlothian. 6. Rob Roy.

V. CONNECTED TRIANGLES.—

STAIR
THIN
BRAIL
RAIN
GLAIR
LAIN
AIL
IN
R

The heart must ring thy Christmas bells,
Thy inward altars raise!
Its faith and hope thy canticles,
And its obedience praise;

THE CHEERFUL LETTER EXCHANGE.

OBJECTS.

1. To cheer and comfort the lonely and discouraged—not only invalids, but all who need cheer and comfort—by the interchange of letters and by gifts of books and periodicals.

2. To supply in some measure to young people in remote places the lack of schools, by gifts of school-books, letters, and, for those who desire it, correspondence classes on history, the natural sciences, and other interesting branches of study. If any desire to join such classes, they may send their names to our secretary.

3. Also to supply, to some extent, the lack of a church. One good sermon or sermon extract is printed in each number of the paper. These sermons are never doctrinal, but practical, and intended to cheer and comfort the sorrowful and aid in giving a vital religion without regard to sect or creed.

Any minister (of any sect) who receives this paper is cordially invited to distribute the copies of the *Cheerful Letter* received among lonely members of his parish, shut-ins, or invalids of whom he may know. He is also invited to write to our headquarters (see address on this page) and give names and addresses of those who may be cheered and helped by becoming our correspondents.

No *theology* is disseminated in our paper. All the religious matter is intended merely to strengthen, cheer, and comfort those in need of such practical help.

Givers of books are reminded that only books of instructive or wholesome nature should be offered in the Book Club. Classics, educational works, and standard novels are always acceptable.

The address of Mrs. Emma M. Backus is now 633½ Third Street, North, St. Petersburg, Florida.

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The Cheerful Letter Exchange offers to start a circulating library in any small community needing one, providing proper location and care can be furnished and satisfactory references supplied.

Apply to Miss Helen L. Wells, 269 Franklin Street, Newton, Mass.

IMPORTANT NOTICES.

The regular monthly meeting of the Cheerful Letter Exchange will be held on Friday, Jan. 5, 1917, at 10.30 A.M., at 25 Beacon Street, Boston. All interested are cordially invited to be present.

The work has grown so it is no longer easy for the Book Club Secretary to care for all that pertains to the Club. The following ladies have volunteered to take charge of the different interests: For Bibles, either for requests or offers, apply to Mrs. Laura Hallett, 37 Pinckney Street, Boston, Mass. For scraps for patchwork, for requests or offers, to Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass. For music, for requests or offers, to Mrs. Thomas Lacey, 145 Grand View Avenue, Wollaston, Mass.

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THE ATTENTION OF ALL READERS OF "THE CHEERFUL LETTER" IS CALLED TO THE FOLLOWING NOTICE:—

It is a rule of the Cheerful Letter Exchange that no one may ask for money, clothing, or other articles, except books and magazines.

The name of any person who fails to obey this rule will be dropped from our list. Any worker receiving such a request should send the letter at once to headquarters.

The Chairman, Mrs. George G. Saville, is at the rooms, 25 Beacon Street, on Thursday afternoons, from 2 until 4.30 P.M.

In sending subscriptions for the *Cheerful Letter*, address The Cheerful Letter Exchange, 25 Beacon Street, Boston, Mass. Subscriptions, 50 cents a year.

Chairman of Cheerful Letter Exchange, Mrs. George G. Saville, 33 Saville Ave., Quincy, Mass.

Editor of "The Cheerful Letter," Miss L. Freeman Clarke.

Book Club Secretary, Mrs. W. B. Nichols, 25 Fairmount Way, Quincy, Mass.